

costs incurred in connection with a surveyor or engineer for a successful request to be removed from the special hazard flood area to the Director. This does not include legal services incurred by the resident.

It is my hope that this legislation will allow communities to work more effectively with FEMA to ensure that residents are given sufficient, fair, and timely notice if they are required to purchase flood insurance and to ensure that homeowners are not held financially liable when a change in a community's flood insurance rate map does not affect their property. With original cosponsors from both sides of the aisle, I hope we can see this common sense solution come to fruition.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH M. HOFFEL

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take a moment to explain my absence from the House on Saturday, May 26. After the Senate passed its version of the tax cut bill on Wednesday of that week, the Senate version and the House version were sent to conference committee to produce a compromise final bill that both houses would vote on.

Following Senate passage, most observers expected the conference report to be ready for a final vote on Thursday, or at the very latest on Friday. However, negotiations dragged on with members receiving only periodic, gloomy updates. Finally, an agreement was announced late Friday night. I spent the entire night in my office waiting for a vote that was promised by 2 or 3 a.m. No vote was called.

At 8 a.m. Saturday, I boarded an Amtrak train to attend my son's graduation from the Hill School in Pottstown, PA later in the morning. This was the last train that I could take and still make my son's graduation. The House voted on the bill about two hours after I left Washington. I apologize to my constituents for not being able to vote on what I believe to be a very flawed tax bill, but I believe the vast majority will understand why I chose not to be there.

Had I been present to vote, I would have voted against the tax bill. Not because I don't think there should be a tax cut, but because this one is simply too big, is heavily tilted to the wealthy, is filled with fiscal gimmicks, and threatens to plunge this country back into deficit spending.

I support an immediate rebate to the American people, and actually supported a larger rebate than was in the bill from the outset of the tax debate. I also conceptually support several other items in the tax cut such as fixing the marriage penalty, reforming the estate tax and providing tuition tax credits. However this bill simply went overboard and threatens the fiscal discipline we have shown over the last several years.

The folly of this tax cut will be shown as the President tries to pay for items like increased defense spending and education reforms that he has not accounted for in the budget, and for years to come as the tax cut is fully

phased in and scarce revenue is needed to meet our national retirement and health care obligations to the growing number of older Americans.

IDENTITY THEFT LEGISLATION

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, four months ago, a little boy in Salem, Oregon named Tyler Benton Bales lost his battle with a rare genetic disease called Hurler Syndrome. Although I never had the pleasure of knowing him, Tyler was somewhat of a celebrity in Salem. In fact, he was the subject of a front page article in the Salem Statesman Journal last December, when a silent auction was held to raise money to offset the cost of an expensive bone marrow transplant that was his only chance to beat Hurler Syndrome. Unfortunately, Tyler's heart wasn't strong enough to survive the rigors of his transplant and chemotherapy. He was only sixteen months old when he passed away.

Mr. Speaker, there's nothing more tragic than losing a child. My heart goes out to Tyler's parents, and to all the other parents of children who suffer from Hurler Syndrome. Unfortunately, the heartache of Tyler's loss hasn't eased for his parents. As if it's not hard enough losing your sixteen month old child, the Bales recently learned—courtesy of the Internal Revenue Service—that someone is claiming Tyler as a dependent on their 2000 income tax return. As disturbing as that is, it gets worse.

Because of disclosure issues, the IRS won't give out the name of the identity thief to the Salem Police Department, even though identity theft is a felony offense in Oregon. The thief could live right down the street or 3,000 miles away—but if the IRS has its way, the Bales—and the Salem Police Department—will never know who stole their son's personal information.

Mr. Speaker, we can't even begin to imagine the anguish this family is going through. Tyler Benton Bales was so much more than a name, a date of birth, and a Social Security number—he was a little boy who was surrounded by love during his brief time with us. His parents—and the countless of other people who loved him—should not see his memory dishonored by a common thief whose identity is actually being protected by the IRS. That's why I'm introducing the ID Theft Loophole Closure Act. This legislation simply requires the IRS to furnish the name, Social Security number, and address of a suspected identity thief to state and local law enforcement agencies for the exclusive purpose of locating that individual.

Identity Theft is not a victimless crime. We must cut through the red tape that is preventing this and other thieves from being prosecuted for their crimes, and I believe this legislation is the right tool for the job. I urge my colleagues to support the ID Theft Loophole Closure Act.

RECOGNIZING GOMBE STATE, NIGERIA

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, in April, I visited West Africa as part of the Congressional Delegation led by our Republican Conference Chairman, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Among the most successful components of the delegation's mission was a visit to Nigeria, and, more specifically, a meeting with various Nigerian governors. The meeting took place on April 7th in Abuja, the capital city.

I had the good fortune of being seated beside Governor Alhaji Abubakar Habu Hashidu, the Executive Governor of Gombe State. Our discussions afforded me a more complete understanding of the numerous opportunities for American business investment in the particular region of Nigeria represented by Gov. Hashidu. Regional investments in the education system there, along with infrastructure modernization and utility enhancement suggest a genuine effort to promote foreign investment, particularly among American entrepreneurs. I found Gov. Hashidu to be an earnest spokesman for his state, and sincere in his desire to strengthen friendships between his constituency and the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I retain in my office a full report on the investment potentials of Gombe State, Nigeria. On behalf of this House, I personally received the document directly from Gov. Hashidu. By these remarks, I serve notice of the availability of the report to each of our colleagues as I have already delivered copies to Members who have indicated interest in its contents.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I hereby submit for the RECORD, the introductory remarks of Gov. Hashidu which accompany the report, and which were presented to the delegation in Abuja. Gov. Hashidu's comments fully summarize his commitment, and that of his government, to economic expansion in Gombe State. His observations should be considered by every Member of Congress and I humbly beg this body's attention in this important matter.

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, ALHAJI ABUBAKAR HABU HASHIDU THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF GOMBE STATE DELIVERED TO THE DELEGATION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES LED BY REP. JESSY WATTS, JR. ON 7TH APRIL 2001 AT ABUJA

Hon. Members of Congress, let me start by, welcoming this esteemed group of Congress men and women of the United States of America, led by Rep. J.C. Watts, Jr.

Your visit to Nigeria at this crucial time of our democratic experiment is most welcome. Our system of Government which is tailored along the United States Presidential system with both Senate and House of Representatives having their clear Legislative Schedules, has been an interesting experience. The various actors in the new democratic project are committed to the success of the experiment. So far, the three arms of Government have shown tolerance and understanding in the principles of power sharing. The experience has been very stimulating and it has the capacity for that providing opportunities to exploit our potentials. We have recognised this fact and we